

*Washington, DC*—Congressman Charles A. Gonzalez (TX-20) voted today to make the single largest investment in history in aid to help students and families pay for college in history. The Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (SAFRA) (H.R. 3221) will expand access to an affordable college education to more American students, transform early education opportunities, and build a world-class community college system.

**“Students in San Antonio and across the nation are getting a much needed boost in educational aid,” said Congressman Gonzalez. “In my district alone, we have over 28,000 students who will be eligible for a Pell Grant award this next academic year as a result of this legislation. This not only increases the grant amount for which students are eligible, but opens windows of educational opportunities.”**

Over the next ten years, the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act will invest more than \$2.9 billion in Texas and \$133.9 million in the 20<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of Texas to increase the maximum annual Pell Grant scholarship to \$5,550 in 2010 and to \$6,900 by 2019. Starting in 2011, the scholarship will be linked to match rising costs-of-living by indexing it to the Consumer Price Index plus 1 percentage point. This not only increases the award students are eligible for, but also increases the number of students eligible for an award. In Congressman Gonzalez’s district, 28,377 students will be eligible for a Pell Grant award in the 2010-2011 academic year.

**“This is a key step in removing barriers that keep our children from attaining a higher education. The people of our community will have a greater chance to obtain the knowledge and career training skills needed to bolster our workforce and successfully lead San Antonio towards a brighter future,” said Congressman Gonzalez.**

SAFRA also keeps interest rates low on government-subsidized loans, makes substantial investments in early childhood education, expands the Perkins low-cost loan program to every U.S. college, and simplifies the process of applying for student financial aid.

**“A higher education is key in preparing the next generation of Americans to face the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This bill is a wise investment, allowing students to take full advantage of an affordable and accessible education, and giving students the opportunity to compete in our global economy and reach their full potential,” added Congressman Gonzalez.**

*For more information on the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act visit <http://edlabor.house.gov/documents/111/pdf/publications/safra-district-by-district/TX-20.pdf>*

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